

July August

Golden Valley 2002

CityNews

Council Begins City Manager Search Process

In June the City of Golden Valley embarked upon a search for a new city manager, and at its July 15 meeting, the City Council outlined the next steps of the recruitment process. The City retained Personnel Decisions International (PDI) to lead the search effort, which garnered 54 applications. PDI narrowed the field to seven semi-finalists for the City interview process.

The City Council will meet in a workshop session to conduct one-hour interviews with the semi-finalists at 6 pm August 7 and at 5 pm August 12. The afternoon before the Council interviews, each candidate will have separate meetings with the City management team and with a team of line employees. Candidates will also have the option to take a tour of Golden Valley.

PDI will assemble information from all of the initial interviews and give the candidates numbered identities. At a special 7 pm meeting Wednesday, August 14, the Council will discuss the candidates, reacting with their own impressions and those expressed by the staff, and select finalists.

The next step is for PDI to conduct management/leadership assessment and background checks on the finalists. The goal is to have information on the finalists ready for the Council to make a decision by the week of September 17. Current City Manager Bill Joynes, who announced his retirement earlier this year, will stay on board until the new city manager is in place.

For more information about the city manager search process, contact Assistant to the City Manager Jeanne Andre at 763-593-8014. ~~~~~

CityNews GETS New Life

Ten years after its last redesign, Golden Valley's City newsletter has been updated again for the new millennium. The new design incorporates the features that contribute to its high readership level (95% as of last City survey) with the aesthetic elements today's readers have come to expect.

"Though the old design was contemporary 10 years ago, it had become merely functional and no longer eye-catching," says Graphic Designer Siri Khalsa. "Current trends call for full-bodied designs, with the use of contrast, shapes, and colors to offset stories and help them pop off the page."

The City's communications team spent the past year studying industry standards for newsletters and developing goals for the redesign. The plan called for using the same successful approach to presenting information combined with a contemporary yet classic look that would appeal to Golden Valley's demographic—an educated, involved audience with a high level of sophistication regarding local government.

For more information, contact Communications Coordinator Cheryl Weiler at 763-593-8004. ~~~~~

In This Issue

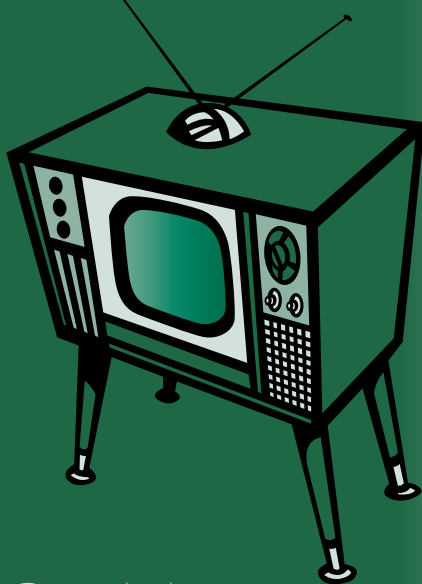
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CABLE CHANNEL 16 HAS NEW MEETING REPLAY SCHEDULE

As a result of upgrades to its master control facility and the need to fit an additional city into the meeting replay rotation, Northwest Community TV has changed its City meeting replay schedule on Cable Channel 16. The new schedule replays meetings on Channel 16 every eight hours instead of every six hours. The new time slots start at 6 pm, 2 am, and 10 am, with Northwest Cities running in the first half-hour of the time block.

The new playback schedule will only affect Golden Valley's Tuesday replay times. Meetings will replay every day at 6:30 pm as usual. On Tuesday, the meetings will replay at 2:30 am and 10:30 am instead of the former 12:30 am and 6:30 am times. For more information, contact the City's Communications Coordinator at 763-593-8004.



City Meeting Replay Schedule

Every Day 6:30 pm

Tuesdays 2:30 am and 10:30 am

Tune in at the top of the hour for *Northwest Cities*, a newsmagazine show focusing on City government.

Property Tax 101: The Market Value Homestead Credit


Since January, *CityNews* has published a series of articles to help you understand your City property tax. The first article explained how the City portion of the property tax is calculated, and the second article focused on Golden Valley's tax levy and tax base.

The most recent article in the series explained how property tax burden can be shifted from one property class to another. This happens when changes in non-levy factors, such as market values and class rates, affect the allocation of tax base among property types.

In the past five years the shift of tax burden to residential properties was mainly the result of legislative action to reduce commercial/industrial (C/I) class rates. In 2003 and beyond, the shift in tax burden to residential properties will result mainly from the fact that residential market values are increasing at a much faster rate than C/I market values. The legislature is well aware of this tax shifting, and in 2002 it approved the market value homestead credit to help offset at least some of the impact on residential homesteads.

The market value homestead credit is limited to a maximum of \$304, which is reached by a home valued at \$76,000. For homesteads valued higher than \$76,000, the credit is phased out at the rate of \$9 for each \$10,000 of the home's value in excess of \$76,000 (see example below). The credit is completely phased out for homes valued higher than \$414,000. On the Truth in Taxation notices and the property tax statements, the credit is allocated to each taxing jurisdiction based on its percentage of the total tax bill.

As residential homesteads continue to increase in value, the amount of the credit decreases. On next year's tax bills this will result in a small percentage increase in the "bottom-line" tax for most residential properties.

If you have questions about the market value homestead credit or your City property tax, contact Finance Director Don Taylor at 763-593-8012. The next issue of *CityNews* will feature an article on fiscal disparities. 

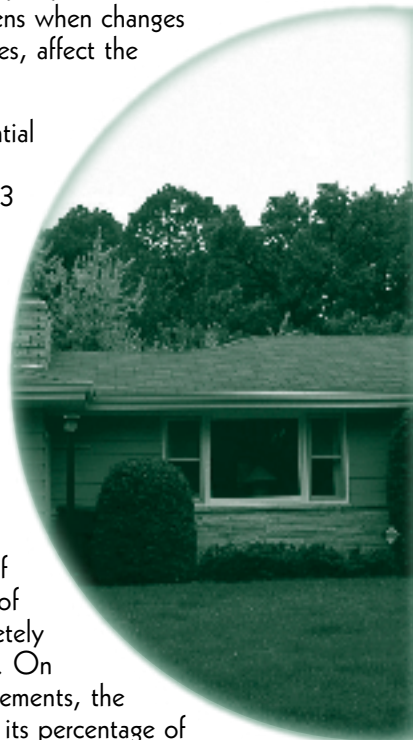
Don Taylor, Finance Director

example

HOMESTEAD MARKET VALUE

CREDIT

\$76,000	\$304
\$175,000	\$215 (\$304 - \$89)
\$250,000	\$147 (\$304 - \$157)
\$425,000	0



Redistricting Changes City Precincts

Golden Valley's local precincts and its congressional and legislative districts changed this year as a result of new information based on the 2000 national census. The map below shows the redrawn districts and precincts, effective starting with the September primary and the November general election. City polling places are shown at the right.

Every 10 years, after the national census, the City redistricts to accommodate the new districts created for other levels of government. This year a judicial panel created the districts, and the City had until the end of April to develop precincts that reflect the new districts. Efforts were made to retain polling places and precincts, but this was not always possible. The City Council adopted the new precincts at its April 16 meeting.

Watch for your new voter verification cards listing your correct district and precinct polling place. They will be mailed by Hennepin County in early August. For more detailed information, check out the voting information and precinct map on the City web site (www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citygovernment/voting.htm), or call 763-593-8017 for a brochure with map and polling places.

Voting Locations

You must vote in your own precinct. Voters may cast ballots between 7 am and 8 pm on election day.

Precinct 1
NE Fire Station
3700 Golden Valley Road

Precinct 2
Valley Presbyterian Church
3100 North Lilac Drive

Precinct 3
Meadowbrook School
5430 Glenwood Avenue

Precinct 4
Sandburg Middle School
2400 Sandburg Lane

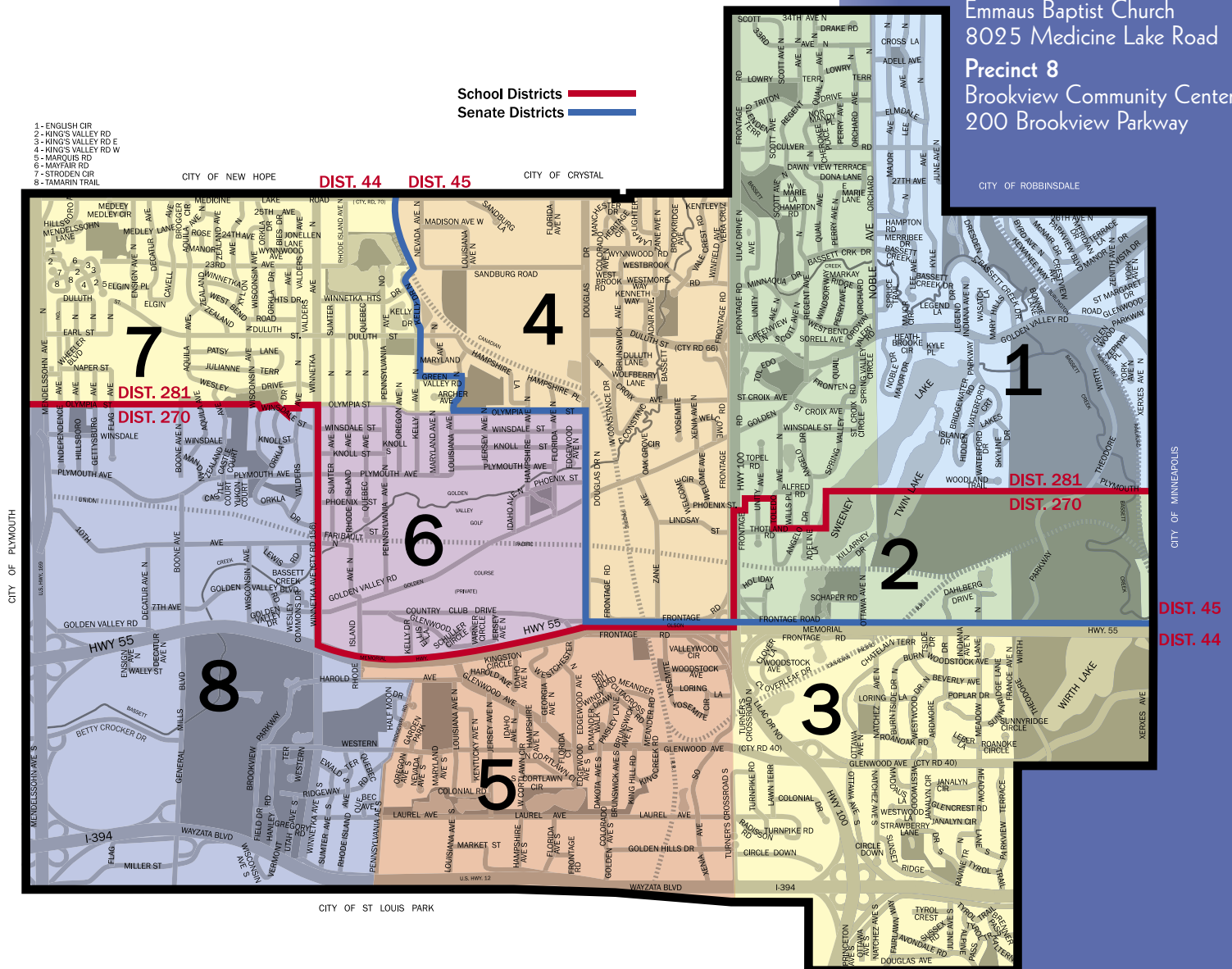
Precinct 5
SE Fire Station
400 Turners Crossroad South

Precinct 6
Golden Valley City Hall
7800 Golden Valley Road

Precinct 7
Emmaus Baptist Church
8025 Medicine Lake Road

Precinct 8
Brookview Community Center
200 Brookview Parkway

School Districts —
Senate Districts —



Holiday Notice

Recycling pick-up the week of the Labor Day holiday will be one day later than usual. Have your recyclables at the curb by 7 am, Saturday, September 7.



The Golden Valley Recycling Program is partially funded by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

24-Hour Recycling Info-Line

Features recorded answers to your recycling questions 24 hours a day. Just call 763-593-8119 to reach the Golden Valley Recycling Information Line (directions for rotary phone users are on the message). For information on:

- curbside recycling, press 1
- apartment recycling, press 2
- yard waste disposal, press 3
- household hazardous waste disposal, press 4

763-593-8119

Missed Pick-Ups

If your recycling is missed on Friday, call Waste Management at 952-890-1100 before noon on the following Monday.

If you have specific recycling questions, call 763-593-8030.

New Trucks Lump Recyclables, But Residents Should Separate Paper

Many residents have recently noticed the new Waste Management recycling trucks around town. Some have also noticed the new trucks have only one opening for the driver to load the recyclables instead of the former three-sort system (three openings for the driver to separate recycling). A few residents have called the City to ask if they can now put all recyclables together in the recycling crate.

Please continue to place newspapers, miscellaneous paper, phone books, boxboard, and corrugated cardboard together in a separate paper bag (or bundle and tie with a string) and set it next to or inside the recycling crate.

Though it may seem unnecessary, Golden Valley Environmental Coordinator Al Lundstrom encourages residents to keep the paper separated. "Metal, steel, and aluminum food and beverage cans, glass bottles and jars, and plastics with necks can all be mixed together," he says, "but residents should still separate paper and put it at the curb in a paper grocery bag. When it is mixed with other recycling it blows away. The goal is to recycle, not to litter."



Waste Management's Steve Chavis says there were several reasons for the conversion to the new trucks. "The new material recovery facility (MRF) in Minneapolis can handle mixed recycling, loading the recyclables in one opening is easier on the drivers and reduces the chance of injury, and finally, the new method is just more efficient."

Golden Valley's curbside recycling program was started in April 1988 in response to a Hennepin County mandate requiring cities to implement recycling programs. Since 1989, the Cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Plymouth have bargained cooperatively for recycling services to result in savings for each city.

If you have questions about recycling, call Al Lundstrom at 763-593-8046. 

COMMUNITY PRIDE SHOWS IN THE YARDS

Nothing shows community pride like well-kept lawns and yards. No one wants to see an old junk car, furniture, or an unkempt compost littering the neighborhood, which is why several City ordinances directly address yard waste and garbage.

Every year, the Public Safety Department and the Park Maintenance Department receive hundreds of calls regarding disorderly yards. There is more to the issue than aesthetics. To protect public health and maintain the City, the Golden Valley City Code (Section 10.01) specifically states that the accumulation of unlicensed, unregistered, or inoperable motor vehicles, household furniture, furnishings or appliances, or metal, wood, glass, paper, rubber, concrete, or other material, whether organic or inorganic, is inappropriate.

For more information on the ordinances pertaining to garbage and lawn maintenance, log onto the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/citycode1/index.htm.

Sixth Annual Golf Classic Tees Off September 13



Golf enthusiasts are encouraged to join the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation (GVHSF) in an upcoming community event to benefit local charities. The event, the sixth annual Golden Valley Golf Classic, is scheduled for Friday, September 13, at Brookview Golf Course.

There is a \$250 fee for foursomes, which includes green fees, cart, continental breakfast, and lunch. Golfers also have a chance to win prizes.

The Foundation is still accepting sponsorship for the tournament in three areas:

- Corporate Sponsor (\$1,000)
- Golf Hole Sponsor (\$500)
- Prizes and Awards: Contributions of cash, merchandise, and in-kind items or gift certificates are welcome for hole contests, prizes, and drawings at the conclusion of the tournament.

All sponsors will be acknowledged in pre- and post-tournament publicity.

Last year's event drew many golfers from Golden Valley and the surrounding area who, with corporate and individual sponsors, helped the Golf Classic raise \$10,513 for local human service organizations. The GVHSF distributes 100% of funds raised to causes directly serving the Golden Valley community. For more information about the Golf Classic or the Golden Valley Human Services Foundation, call Sue Virnig, staff liaison, at 763-593-8010. 

GV Foundation Taking Funding Applications

The Golden Valley Human Services Foundation, which is comprised of community volunteers, helps fund several nonprofit agencies that serve Golden Valley residents in need. In 2002, the Foundation contributed \$85,501 to Home Free Shelter, PRISM, YMCA Detached Work Program, Northwest Suburban Dinner at Your Door, Crisis Connection, Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery, and Senior Community Services.

The deadline for 2003 funding applications is August 31, 2002, at 4:30 pm. The Foundation will review funding requests and allocate available funds using the following guidelines:

- The services must not be duplicated by a level of government.
- The service provided is for Golden Valley residents at a time of crisis.
- The service must include cooperation or collaboration between organizations.
- Foundation funding should be a "last resort" source for funding the services.
- The organization should use the funds granted by the Foundation to serve Golden Valley citizens.
- Funding shall be granted to human service organizations and not to an individual or individuals.
- Funding will not be granted to any organization licensed in the City of Golden Valley for lawful gambling operations.

Pick up applications at the Finance Department in City Hall. If you want more information or would like to make a tax deductible contribution, call 763-593-8010.

SENIOR STUFF

Bingo Party and Supper—Aug 26, 7 pm, Brookview

Blood Pressure Screenings—Aug 28 and Sept 25, 11 am - noon, Brookview

Starlight Tea Dance—Featuring Dick Macko Band. Sept 6, 1 pm, Brookview. Register in advance.

Defensive Driving Course—Four-hour refresher: Sept 12, 9 am - 1 pm, Brookview

Upcoming Trips (register early)—Sept 5: Swedish Saga; Sept 17-18: Midwest Artists and Harvesting the Wind, Redline Museum, Watertown, SD; Sept 25: "Music Man," Chanhasen Dinner Theater; Oct 1: Spooner Train Ride; Oct 16: "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change," Plymouth Playhouse.

Health Insurance Help—Second Tuesday of each month, 9 am - noon, Brookview. Trained volunteer counselors help sort out health and Medicare forms, file insurance claims, and obtain information about Medicare supplemental or long-term care policies. Schedule in advance at 763-512-2339. Sponsored by Senior Community Services.

PRISM Express provides seniors with door-to-door transportation service for medical appointments, personal shopping, etc. Schedule in advance at 763-529-1252.

Five Cities Transportation Program offers rides to seniors living in senior housing buildings, apartments, and in their own homes for shopping, social activities, and senior program events. Dates and times are listed in the monthly Golden Valley Senior Newsletter. Reserve a ride by calling the Five Cities office (763-537-0229) Monday - Friday, 8 am - 3 pm.

For more information and to register, contact:

Golden Valley Seniors Program
Brookview Community Center
 200 Brookview Parkway
 Golden Valley, MN 55426
 763-512-2339
 8 am - 5 pm, Monday - Friday

2002 Views of the Valley Photo Contest Awards Five Prizes

Golden Valley's tenth annual *Views of the Valley* photo contest drew a total of 53 entries in two separate categories: Natural Golden Valley (landscapes, flora, fauna, etc), or Golden Valley Lifestyle (cityscapes, buildings, people, activities, etc). Entrants tried to capture on film their version of the city's beauty, uniqueness, and quality of life. Guided by these standards and the basics of good photography, the judges gave top honors to the photos on these pages. The People's Choice Award was presented to the photo most favored by folks who viewed the photo contest exhibit at City Hall and on the City web site.

The prize for first place in each of the two categories is \$100. Second place winners receive \$50. Winning photos are reproduced for permanent display in City Hall. Winners also receive certificates

of appreciation at a City Council meeting. Entrants must be Golden Valley residents and must agree to let the City of Golden Valley publish entered photos in City publications with proper credit. All photo entries become the property of the City of Golden Valley and are not returned.

This year's judges were Lorrie Bentenga (PhotoFast), Vaike Radamus (former *Views of the Valley* winner), Jerry Beck (New Hope Communications Coordinator), and Ann Gallagher (host of Cable 12's *Northwest Cities* program).

The contest aims to promote Golden Valley and civic pride. The deadline for next year's photo contest will be June 9, 2003. For more information, call 763-593-8004. 

Overall Grand Prize and Natural Golden Valley First Place

*"General Mills Wild
Grasses at Sunset"*

by
Ellen G. Anderson
2201 Stroden Circle



People's Choice



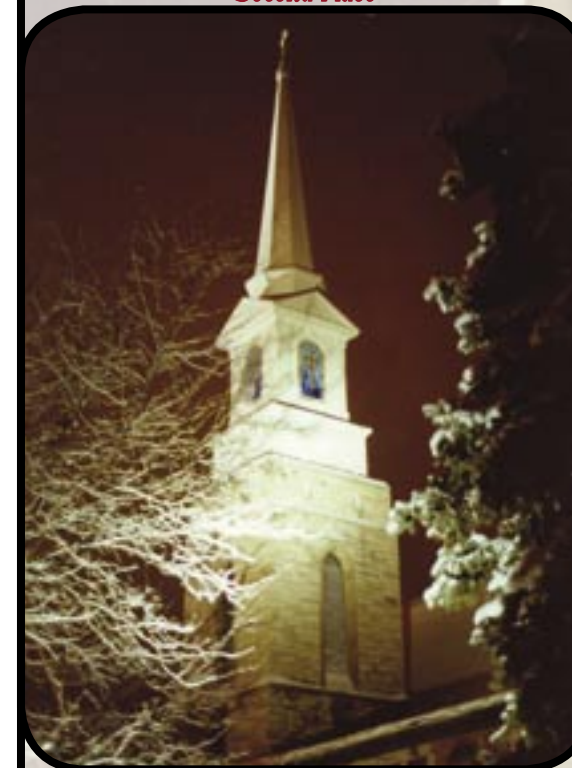
"Steps to Winter"
by Patricia Ruben-Miller, 6400 Winsdale Street

Golden Valley Lifestyles First Place



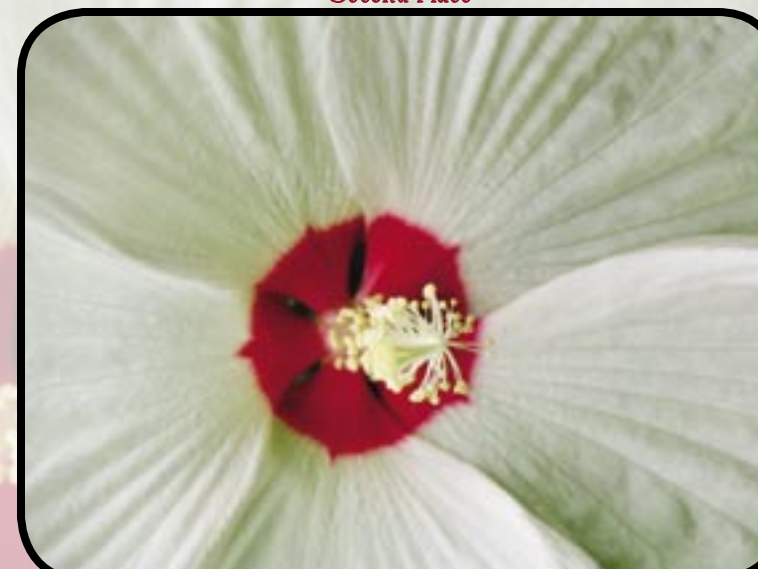
"New Life"
by Janice Laulainen, 6040 Golden Valley Road

Golden Valley Lifestyles Second Place



"Winter at Calvary"
by Ellen Meier, 1110 Boone Ave N

Natural Golden Valley Second Place



"Staff of Life"
by Karren Mills, 4015 Wasatch Lane N

Park & Rec News

Fall Recreation Brochure—This guide to Golden Valley's fall recreation activities is scheduled to arrive in your mailbox the last week of August. If you do not receive one, call 763-512-2345. Watch for it also on the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us.

Family & Friends American Heart Association CPR—BLS Healthcare Providers. Meets requirement for all American Heart Association CPR skills. August 22: 6:15 - 10:30 pm.

Fall Sports Leagues—The City of Golden Valley offers a variety of fall sports leagues. Call the Park and Recreation Department today at 763-512-2345 for a team registration packet.

- **Basketball**—Adult 3-on-3 Unofficial Basketball: Wednesdays, starts Sept 18; Adult 5-on-5 Unofficial Basketball: Tuesdays, starts Sept 17; 3-on-3 Unofficial Women's Basketball: Tuesdays, starts Sept 17; 3-on-3 Teen (ages 15 - 18) Basketball: Tuesdays, starts Sept 17.
- **Soccer**—Adult Co-Rec Soccer: Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons, starts early September.
- **Softball**—Men's Softball: Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays, starts last week of August; Adult Co-Rec Softball: Thursdays and Fridays, starts last week of August.
- **Volleyball**—Adult Co-Rec Unofficial Volleyball: Mondays, starts Sept 16; Men's Unofficial Volleyball: Wednesdays, starts Sept 18; Women's Unofficial Volleyball: Wednesdays, starts Sept 18.

For more information and to register, contact:

Park & Recreation
Brookview Community Center
200 Brookview Parkway
Golden Valley, MN 55426
763-512-2345
Monday - Friday, 8 am - 4:30 pm

Make Safety A Priority In Your Summer Fun

Golden Valley's award-winning Public Safety Department is concerned about your safety and asks that you review the tips on this page to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

ON THE PLAYGROUND

Playgrounds are a big draw, but things like misuse of equipment, poor child supervision, vandalism, or faulty equipment can compromise safety.

- Make sure the surface beneath play equipment is a soft material.
- Check equipment for loose parts, rust, and splintered wood.
- Supervise children on playground.
- Tell children not to shove, to wait their turn, and to keep a safe distance from others swinging.

If you see or suspect faulty equipment in Golden Valley parks, please report it immediately to the Park Maintenance Department at 763-593-8045.

SCOOTER ALERT

The number of scooter-related injuries is increasing—nearly 30% result in a fracture or dislocation. Remember, kids should always wear properly fitting helmets and elbow and knee pads. Check scooters often for hazards such as broken or cracked parts and sharp edges. For a complete list of scooter recalls, go to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's web site at www.cpsc.gov.

PROPER PROTECTIVE GEAR

Wearing the proper protective gear for the activity will help keep you safe.

- Football: pads, helmet, mouthguard
- Baseball: mitt and batting helmet
- Soccer: shin guards
- Biking: helmet
- Inline Skating and Skateboarding: helmet, wrist guards, and elbow and knee pads

PREVENTING DEHYDRATION

Fluids are essential sports equipment, like helmets or shin guards. Children can lose up to a quart of sweat during a two-hour game. Children are more susceptible to heat illness because they have a reduced ability to lose heat through sweating and they do not have the physiological drive to replenish fluid. Use the following guidelines to keep kids hydrated during activities. Keep in mind, a kid-sized gulp is about 1/2 an ounce.

- Before activity: drink 12 ounces of fluid.
- During activity: drink 5 ounces of fluid every 20 minutes.
- After activity: drink every 20 minutes for the first hour after activity.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO GRANDPARENTS

According to the US Census Bureau, more and more grandparents are caring for their grandkids. Even with their extensive knowledge of childrearing, grandparents should realize the hazards in the world are a little different now, and a refresher can never hurt.

NEVER, NEVER, NEVER

leave a child (or pet) unattended in a vehicle, even with the window slightly open. On a typical summer day, the temperature can potentially reach deadly levels in minutes. At least 30 children died last year of hyperthermia.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SAFETY FOR CHILDREN, ADULTS CAN CALL 651-228-7325. KIDS CAN CALL SAFETY SAFARI AT 651-602-3242.

Bob Hernz Takes Public Safety Helm

It's nothing new for Golden Valley's public safety director to have come up through department ranks. It is new, however, for the director to have experience as a firefighter. When police sergeant Bob Hernz was named the City's new public safety director in June, it capped a 26-year career with the department, including a 10-year stint as a firefighter.

Hernz was a University of Minnesota freshman in 1976 when a friend turned him on to the Golden Valley Fire Department. His time in the public safety building exposed him to police work, which he decided "looked more interesting than the average business degree." He changed his degree plan to law enforcement and public administration, and by fall 1976 he was working as a Golden Valley CSO.

After that, things moved quickly. Hernz became a dispatcher in 1978, and months later he was hired as a patrol officer. He was promoted to corporal in 1982, served as a detective from 1983-1989, then supervised the dispatch center until it moved to St Louis Park in 1994. In 1998 Hernz was promoted to sergeant and went back on patrol as a supervisor after 15 years in the office. He was working as a detective sergeant when he got his most recent promotion.

"I've tried not to look beyond the job I'm doing," says Hernz. "I've always believed that if you did your job well and prepared yourself—worked hard—that you'd be ready when the opportunities presented themselves."

Part of Hernz' preparation includes his past four years (three as chair) on the District 281 School Board. "I used the school board as an opportunity to develop skills I didn't have a chance to develop elsewhere," he says. "It's also been a chance to work with diverse groups of people on challenging problems and then developing solutions." Because he believes both the City and the school board deserve his full attention as a leader, Hernz will resign his school board position at the end of the summer. "But, education continues to be one of my passions, and I plan to stay involved in some volunteer capacity," he adds.

Hernz says his number one challenge as public safety director will be retaining, promoting, recruiting, and hiring personnel. He wants to make sure his staff members have the training and support they need to do their jobs well. "We've got so many talented people in Police and Fire, and everything is going so well. I don't see a need for major changes."

He also sees his job as recognizing emerging trends and issues in the community and working collaboratively to develop measures to meet those needs. For Hernz, this means the basics—traffic issues and neighborhood concerns—as well as finding after-school opportunities for middle-school-aged kids to keep them safe. Another trend he expects to deal with results from changes in the health care system and an increasing number of vulnerable people living in their homes.

"A big part of the job for a police officer is being a problem solver," says Hernz. "I'm grateful for the opportunity. It's one of those jobs I've always thought it would be great to do."



WEST Nile VIRUS FOUND IN GOLDEN VALLEY

A dead crow found in Golden Valley tested positive July 24 for West Nile Virus (WNV), marking the first time the virus has been identified in Minnesota. Another bird found in Isle, Minnesota, also tested positive for the virus.

According to the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (MMCD), there is an extremely low risk of human infection. However, people should take extra precautions to protect themselves against mosquito bites:

- Use mosquito repellent and/or cover your skin with clothing when outdoors.
- Avoid outdoor activities at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Eliminate mosquito breeding sites on your property, such as areas of standing water or standing water in toys, containers, or tires. Change water in bird baths weekly.

Most humans infected by the virus show very mild or no symptoms, generally a fever and headache. Less than one percent become seriously ill, and that occurs within three to 15 days after the bite of the infected mosquito. Those seriously infected, particularly the elderly, display symptoms such as muscle weakness, stiff neck, disorientation, and convulsions.

MMCD is working closely with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to detect and control WNV. This includes surveillance for WNV activity in mosquitoes, birds, horses, other animals, and humans. The MMCD asks that residents who find dead birds, particularly crows or blue jays, contact the MMCD.

"We'll probably be more active monitoring mosquitoes in Golden Valley and testing them for various viruses," says MMCD spokesperson Mike McLean.

For more information on WNV or local mosquito control efforts, contact the MMCD at 651-645-9149 or www.mmcd.org.

NATURAL History of Golden Valley

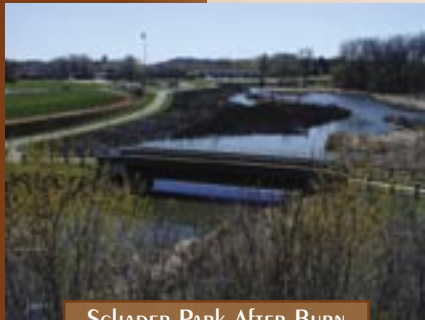
About a billion years ago, shallow seas advanced and retreated from the area, depositing a layer of sedimentary rock. The top layer of bedrock under Golden Valley is the St Peter Sandstone, about 100 feet beneath the surface.

The local landscape today is largely the result of Late Wisconsin glaciation. First, the Superior lobe advanced, transporting scoured material. Then, the Grantsburg sublobe of the Des Moines lobe advanced and retreated, leaving many areas within this region laden with post-glacial organic deposits.

As the earth settled down some, changes in the landscape were mostly in vegetation, instead of formation.

About 11,000 years ago, while the region was still cold, spruce trees and other boreal vegetation inhabited the area. As the climate warmed, pines replaced the spruce, and prairie species became prevalent. A warming and drying trend continued producing prairie and oak savanna. Periodic fires helped maintain this open landscape. When a cooling trend began about 4,000 years ago, deciduous forests began expanding.

During the 1840 and 1850 land surveys, the landscape was a mixture of oak woodlands, oak savanna, wet prairies, and marshes. Following European settlement in the area, rapid changes occurred. Wetlands were drained and filled, turf grass and farms replaced native plants, and domesticated trees and foreign plants were planted extensively. Some non-native plants, including European Buckthorn, purple loosestrife, garlic mustard, and reedy canary grass, have escaped cultivation to become invasive threats to the last remaining natural plants in the area.



SCHAPER PARK AFTER BURN



NATIVE PLANTS AT SCHAPER

Plants Go Native In Golden Valley

Some of you may have noticed small, controlled fires in Golden Valley since last summer when the area around the Xenia Avenue Pond was cropped with flames. The most recent burn was conducted in Schaper Park May 2. Managed by Prairie Restorations Inc, these burns are necessary to promote the native grasses that have been planted in both areas. Spring burns are carefully timed for maximum benefit of native plants, proper weather conditions, site conditions, and impact on nearby residents. Burning reduces the competition from woody plants and non-native plants and hastens natural nutrient recycling.

NATIVE AREAS IN GOLDEN VALLEY

Schaper Park, Xenia Pond, Hampshire Pond, and Sandburg Lane Pond have been planted with native vegetation, including grasses such as side oats grama, blue grama, little bluestems, and prairie dropseed. Wildflower species, such as purple prairie clover, black-eyed Susan, New England aster, giant hyssop, and prairie smoke have been mixed in for greater diversity.

WHY NATIVE PLANTS

Planting native vegetation is the recommendation of Golden Valley's Best Management Practices (BMP) and encompasses several goals, says Golden Valley Environmental Coordinator Al Lundstrom. "Native grasses create a buffer zone around bodies of water and aid in filtering out pollutants that are directed toward the ponds through the storm water system. Further, native landscapes, over time, cost less to maintain. Finally, native plants are best adapted to the local climate and, once established, seldom need watering, mulching, protection from frost, or continuous mowing."

WHAT ARE NATIVE PLANTS

Native plants are usually defined as ones that grew naturally in a specific area before European settlement. "Exotics" are non-native plant species introduced hundreds of years ago by settlers and travelers or spread by animals, wind, and water. Some of the new plants introduced to Minnesota were very competitive and quickly crowded out existing native plants.

HOW DOES THE NATIVE GARDEN GROW

Often people think native plants fail the first year, when in fact the opposite is true. During the first year of growth, native plants put most of their energy into their root systems. Further, many native plants do not begin to grow until late spring or early summer, when the soil temperatures are higher. During the second year of growth, with root systems relatively established, energy is allocated to growth above ground. Once native plants are established, very few invasive weeds can compete with them.

"What we've learned," continues Lundstrom, "is that planting with native vegetation is a two-part process. First restoration, then management. You just can't plant and run."

Residents can expect to see more areas of native plantings and more controlled spring burns. "The City has a long-term commitment to this," says Lundstrom. If you have questions, call Lundstrom at 763-593-8046.

Tina Perpich, Communications Assistant

Sealcoating Extends Life Of Streets

This summer, seven miles of Golden Valley streets were sealcoated as part of the City's ongoing street maintenance program. Sealcoating is a surface treatment that provides for excellent wear and waterproofing and also improves skid resistance.

Allied Blacktop of Maple Grove applied the sealcoat—a single spraying of liquid asphalt on the existing bituminous surface, followed immediately by a single layer of aggregate (small pieces of rock) of as uniform size as practical. City crews performed all preparatory work and sweeping.

Why SEALCOAT?


Sealcoating is one of the most common and cost-effective methods of preventative street maintenance. It helps restore some of the original elasticity to the surface, enabling the asphalt to survive the expansion caused by heat and contraction that occurs in winter. Unprotected asphalt dries out, becomes brittle, and eventually cracks. This leads to premature failure of the asphalt.

Asphalt begins to age as soon as it is paved. The first visible sign is when the pavement becomes noticeably grayer. This sign of chemical oxidation, often called aging or age-hardening, makes pavement more brittle and subject to wear and cracking. About the same time, asphalt also begins raveling, which is the degradation of the binder that holds the aggregate (small rocks) in place. As raveling progresses, the asphalt weakens and hairline cracks spread and deepen. Water then collects in the pores and cracks, freezing and forcing the ice downward. The surface cracks deepen to the roadbed and weaken the foundation of the asphalt.

Once the foundation is affected, the weight of vehicles increases cracking, and alligator cracks appear (the cracks resemble alligator skin).

The cracks worsen as more water enters and vehicles continue to compress the sub-base. When mud pumps up through these cracks, the asphalt has reached the point of failure. It breaks into small pieces and pops out, forming potholes or larger ruts. At this point, sealcoating is no longer an option, and often the street has to be replaced.

Some experts claim sealcoating extends the life of asphalt surfaces by as much as 300%. The cost of sealcoating is a minor expense when compared to the cost of pavement replacement.

If you have questions about a particular street, contact the Street Maintenance Department at 763-593-8082. If you have questions about the Street Maintenance Program, call the City Public Works Maintenance Manager at 763-593-3981. 

Highway 100 Update

Work on the Minnesota Department of Transportation's (MnDOT) Hwy 100 project through Golden Valley, Crystal, Robbinsdale, and Brooklyn Center continues. The reconstructed freeway will be six lanes (three in each direction) from I-394 to County Road 81 and four lanes (two in each direction) north of County Road 81. Here are current highlights:

Segment I (Glenwood Ave to Duluth St)—The loops from eastbound Hwy 55 to northbound Hwy 100 and northbound Hwy 100 to westbound Hwy 55 are closed; bypasses are in place until the new overpass is constructed. Work continues on the southbound lanes and the bridges. The southbound lanes will accommodate northbound traffic when, in about four weeks, the northbound lanes are closed for grading and paving. Work is expected to be completed in October 2002.

Segment II (29th Ave N to 38th Ave N)—The work is in the final stages. Segment II will provide five lanes of traffic (three northbound and two southbound) until Segment V is completed.

Segment V (Duluth St to 29th Ave N)—Crews started paving in the northwest quadrant and on the temporary bridge (and to the north and south of it) over Duluth St. Temporary signal lights have been installed and, once the frontage road is paved, work will move to southbound ramp. Lane closures will occur during non-rush hour. In the northeast quadrant, crews started grading and will soon begin work on a noise wall and demolition of the east half of the existing bridge. Traffic will be detoured to the west during demolition. Later this summer, crews will begin excavating a new storm water pond in the northeast quadrant. The new Duluth St bridge will accommodate six lanes of traffic (three in each direction), and improve exit and entrance ramp safety. Work is expected to be completed by fall 2003.

MnDOT will post signs announcing street or access closings about two weeks before they occur. Watch for updated information on the Hwy 100 reconstruction project in the next issue of *CityNews*. You can get more frequent updates from the City web site at www.ci.golden-valley.mn.us/streets/streetconst.htm, which includes links to MnDOT's web site. Both sites will feature the latest news releases regarding the project as well as *Hot Spots*, MnDOT's project update news sheet.

GV Communications, Public Safety Efforts Receive Recognition

The Minnesota Association of Government Communicators (MAGC), an organization of public sector communications professionals, recently presented the City of Golden Valley's communications team with three 2002 MAGC Northern Lights Communications Awards.

- Golden Valley's Environmental Brochure Series received an Award of Excellence in the category for promotional or informational brochures and pamphlets.
- Golden Valley's Environmental Communications Plan received an Award of Merit in the category for public information campaigns.
- Golden Valley's *Corporate Call: A Firefighter Recruitment Program* received an Award of Merit for visual design. Corporate Call is a collaborative effort between the GVFD and area businesses to maintain the high quality of fire service in the community.

In June, the League of Minnesota Cities recognized the *Corporate Call* program with its 2002 City Achievement Award in Public Safety. The next issue of *CityNews* will feature a complete story on the success of *Corporate Call*.

For more information about these awards contact Communications Coordinator Cheryl Weiler (763-593-8004) or Fire Chief Mark Kuhnly (763-593-8080).



763-593-8000

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SCOTT D. GRAYSON | GLORIA L. JOHNSON | JAN A. LESUER | BLAIR TREMERE

MAYOR | LINDA R. LOOMIS

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CITY MANAGER | BILL JOYNES

EDITOR | CHERYL WEILER

ASSISTANT EDITOR | TINA PERPICH

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City of
Golden Valley
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